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Convenient Scapegoat

Remember how many Americans anticipated a much better day for Nicaragua's human-rights-deprived people when the dictatorial regime of President Anastasio Somoza was ousted? Well, a human rights advocate said recently that political repression under the Sandinista government is much worse than when the old crowd was in charge.

Jose Gonzales, who founded a human rights commission in the Central American country two years before the Sandinista revolution, told a news conference in Washington that "a totalitarian kind of control is coming over the whole country." He told reporters that the formation of committees for the defense of the revolution, patterned after the Cuban model, has sharply limited dissent against the government.

Nicaraguan authorities "see the CIA everywhere," he asserted. And that is the rub. "There is a

paranoic kind of atmosphere."

To hear its critics abroad, and occasionally critics in the United States, no organization on earth has had such nefarious involvement in the affairs of men and nations as the Central Intelligence Agency.

It should be remembered that the agency's purpose is such that no one should ever have expected it to be one of the "good guys." There is a dark, cold and bloody world out there, and the CIA has a mission to perform.

Many Americans also fail to realize that promotion and protection of this country's safety is the CIA's first obligation. Although there clearly have been excesses, the CIA is trying to meet its responsibility with sincerity and skill. But that reality will not stop persecutors of their peoples from using the CIA as a convenient whipping boy.